



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CT Department of Agriculture Announces 2010 Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week

**Hartford, CT**– Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week, a new promotion initiated by the CT Department of Agriculture’s Farm-to-Chef Program, will run **Sunday, September 26, 2010, through Saturday, October 2, 2010**. Open to all restaurants and foodservice businesses in the state, it invites participants to create and offer a separate Farm-to-Chef menu showcasing CT Grown ingredients and CT wines.

“While many Farm-to-Chef members source locally on a regular basis, we hope this special event will entice new restaurants and businesses to give CT Grown ingredients a try. Because it is only a one-week commitment, it is an easy way for chefs to try local farm products without feeling overwhelmed,” said Linda Piotrowicz, Farm-to-Chef Program Manager.

“Of course, once they get a taste of CT Grown ingredients, we are confident they will not want to go back,” she added with a smile.

Guidelines are fairly simple:

1. Each participant shall offer a separate Farm-to-Chef menu of at least four items, each showcasing one or more CT Grown ingredients, from 9/26/10 through 10/2/10.
2. Businesses that serve alcohol also must include at least one CT Wine on the menu during Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week.
3. Pricing will be left to the discretion of each venue in order to encourage participation by many different styles and types of restaurants and foodservice businesses.

The following also are encouraged:

1. Use of a wide variety of CT Grown ingredients, including proteins, cheese, milk, honey, maple syrup, fruits, and vegetables.
2. Pricing of the Farm-to-Chef menu that falls within the normal range for that business.
3. Incorporation of related events during Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week, such as farmer appearances, talks, CT wine tastings, chef demonstrations, tours, recipe hand-outs, etc.

According to Piotrowicz, the public is becoming increasingly aware of what they are eating and where it comes from. Interest in local food is soaring, evidenced by an all-time record number of farmers' markets in the state last year, 125. Consumers are seeking fresh, locally grown foods for use in their own kitchens, and they have begun looking for them when dining out as well.

"We have been sourcing from nearby farms for years," explained Scott Miller, Executive Chef at Max's Oyster Bar and longtime Farm-to-Chef member. "This past year we were able to serve CT Grown salad greens every day, even throughout the winter, thanks to an increase in season-extension production methods employed by area farmers."

"The quality of local food does not compare to that of ingredients shipped in from across the country," Chef Miller continued. "It does take some extra effort to work with many small farms instead of buying from one or two huge suppliers, but it is time and energy well spent. Our customers definitely notice the difference. After all, food that spends the least amount of time out of the soil, and the least amount of time on a big rig, just simply tastes better."

The CT Department of Agriculture will promote and publicize Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week and will post information about each participating businesses on the agency's website. The Department also will provide businesses with resources to help promote their involvement in Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration week and to help locate sources of CT Grown ingredients.

Interested businesses must complete an [online pre-application](#) no later than Friday, **April 30, 2010**. Information provided will be used in the promotion of Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week. Information required in the pre-application includes

- Company contact info
- Proposed Farm-to-Chef menu (minimum of four items)
- CT Grown ingredient(s) to be showcased in each item
- Proposed source of each CT Grown ingredient
- CT Wine(s) to be offered (minimum of one for any business that serves alcohol)
- Pricing for the menu

Pre-applications must be completed online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QG2YVWT>.

All participants must also submit a final application with confirmed menu and a list of featured farms and their ingredients. Final application information will be sent out to all participants in July and must be completed no later than **August 13, 2010**. This information will be used in Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week promotional materials.

For more information, please contact Linda Piotrowicz at [Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov](mailto:Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov) or 860-713-2558.

*The CT Farm-to-Chef Program helps connect Connecticut chefs and food service professionals with growers, producers, and distributors of CT Grown products. It also helps the public locate restaurants, institutions, and other dining facilities that serve foods prepared with CT Grown ingredients. Please visit [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) and click on "Programs and Services" for more information.*

**CONNECTICUT GROWN - The Local Flavor**

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